

BOP THE HEDGEHOGS

This tossing activity is easy enough that anyone can have fun playing it. Tossing involves balance. Whenever you toss an object, your center of gravity is slightly disturbed and you must control the forward momentum to keep your balance. Bop the Hedgehogs is a tossing game that helps participants learn to maintain balance and control momentum when letting go of an object. The use of visual targets helps improve eye–hand coordination, and core stability makes a difference, too.

Benefits »

- Focuses on balance, postural control, and core stability.
- Develops eye–hand coordination.
- Allows almost anyone to participate in a fun and easy activity.

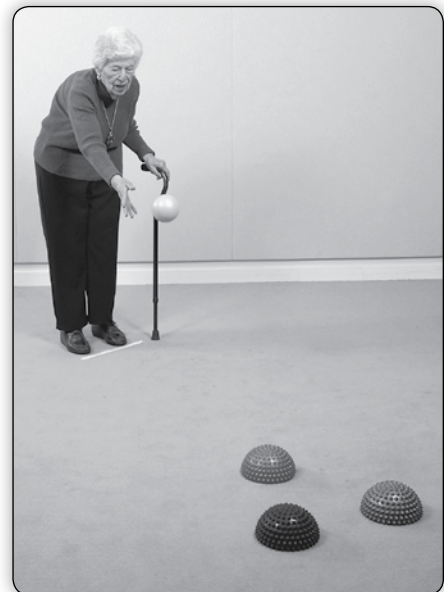
Set It Up »

You will need tape to create a line for participants to stand behind, and you will need objects to toss and targets to hit. Soft objects and rings are good for tossing because they won't hurt someone if they bounce. Plan on having each participant toss at least three objects. Hedgehogs are the target, but you can also use other items for targets, such as agility dots, boxes, barrels, bull's-eye targets, and so on. Make it your own and enjoy!

How to Do It »

Put down a line for participants to stand behind. Put the targets out front. Assign point values to the targets, if you like. For example, red hedgehogs are 10 points, yellow are 5, and so on.

- Have participants practice a few throws. Underhanded is the safest and easiest for most, but let them decide. Coach them to keep their balance using core stability (an offset foot position will increase balance). Also practice how to extend their arms over the start line (offset feet and drop the hips back to act as an anchor). They will probably have fun being creative with their throws.
- Give each participant three objects to toss. Participants try to hit the targets with as much accuracy as they can. If it is too easy, make it more difficult. Here are some cues to use:
 - Stand stable.
 - Make a plan—what can you do to hit the target? What balance lessons will you apply?
 - Wind up your arm for the toss (pull it back).
 - Keep your eye on the target all the way through to the release.
 - How did your first plan work? Try again. What will you change?



Give It More Balance »

- ⦿ Throw from a balance mat.
- ⦿ Throw while standing on toes. (Advanced)
- ⦿ Play the game on grass.
- ⦿ Toss from one leg. (Advanced)

Keep It Safe »

Let participants determine the challenge level. Stand near the throwing line at first. Allow those with walkers to bring them to the start line.

Live It »

Hedgehogs are cute and make fun targets for tossing games that improve postural control.